

YOLO LAND TRUST



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Protecting Yolo County land for over 20 years.

FALL/WINTER 2009

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The Yolo Land Trust is a 501c3 nonprofit organization founded in 1988 by farmers, community leaders and conservationists dedicated to protecting Yolo County's land resources.



Receive YLT E-News by going to our Web site, www.YoloLandTrust.org or providing us with your email address on the enclosed remit envelope.

YLT easements preserve Swainson's Hawk habitat in the Putah Creek corridor south of Davis

YLT worked with the Yolo Natural Heritage Program Joint Powers Agency and four landowners along Putah Creek, south of the City of Davis, to complete five conservation easements benefiting the Swainson's Hawk through the preservation of agricultural lands that provide high value foraging habitat. Totalling 430 acres, these easements compliment existing conservation in the area



Photo by LorrieJo Williams of one of our Yolo County Swainson's Hawks

and form a cornerstone of permanently protected foraging habitat benefiting Swainson's Hawks and other raptors. The easements also protect the riparian vegetation for nesting habitat along Putah Creek.

Kristen Bennett joins the YLT Board of Directors

"The Yolo Land Trust's goal of preserving agricultural land into perpetuity fits right in with my personal desire to see that, in the future, Yolo County remains as agriculturally productive and aesthetically pleasing as it is today. Being on the board gives me a way of turning that desire into action."

Kristen is a native Californian and has spent the last 20 years living in Yolo County. She began working at the Calgene Campus of Monsanto in 1998 and has been involved in various research projects to introduce traits into crop plants, through biotechnology, that will benefit consumers and farmers. Kristen is a graduate of Class XXXVI of the California Agricultural Leadership program and a member of the American Society of Plant Biology, the American Association

for the Advancement of Science and the Gamma Sigma Delta Honor Society. She regularly volunteers her time to community organizations such as Explorit Science Center, Northern California Multiple Sclerosis Society, STEAC and local public schools. She received her Bachelor's degree in Botany from Humboldt State University in 1988. She then went on to the University of California at Davis, receiving a Master of Science degree in Plant Physiology in 1992 and a Ph.D. degree in Plant Biology in 1998. She currently resides in Davis with her husband Alan and three children.



Kristen Bennett

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Board Updates *Continued From Page 1*

Lifelong Davis resident and Yolo Land Trust Board Member Val Dolcini has a new job with the Obama administration as the California Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency. With his new responsibilities, he has stepped down from the YLT Board but will continue to support our land preservation efforts in his new position. Clarksburg farmer Greg Merwin has also recently stepped off the board after many years of dedication to YLT but will continue to serve on the Land Conservation Committee of the board and help out with annual easement monitoring. A former engineer for Laugenour and Meikle and Woodland resident Rich

Jenness retired recently and concluded his time on the YLT board. He will also continue to serve on the Land Conservation Committee and help out with annual easement monitoring. We congratulate Rich for being recognized as the Woodland Chamber of Commerce Agri-Business Person of the Year at the recent Farm-City Banquet. Suzanne Peabody Ashworth, owner of Del Rio Botanicals and Peabody Ranch in West Sacramento has stepped off the board to dedicate her time to farming, cooking, and teaching, but fortunately for us, she continues to prepare an amazing spread made from her own farm products for YLT events.

The Area's Agricultural splendor as seen through the eyes of local artists

"For Yolo County farmers, art is an added perk to the daily routine. It is as ubiquitous as a landlocked sea of midsummer tomatoes, as poetic as dawn's diaphanous glow when it reaches its fingers into a sleepy orchard of almond blossoms. As quickly as one pastoral image paints itself in the farmer's mind, another scene arrives in flux; a forever-shifting portrait framed by the limits of memory and the bias of repetition." Excerpt from an article published in the Sacramento Bee on Friday, Sep. 25, 2009

In October, the ArtFarm event was attended by over 150 people and raised nearly \$5,000 for YoloArts' art education programs and YLT. The Art and Ag Project will start up again in January with a grant from the Irvine Foundation to YoloArts. Last year, over 50 local artists participated. For the artists, it is an opportunity to harness the aesthetic energy of privately-owned farmlands without having to trespass or compromise their safety from a side-of-the-road vantage point. For the farmers, it is a priceless snapshot of a single moment arrived at through a lifetime of hard work; an opportunity to see what has been seen thousands of times before through the creative lenses of painters, photographers and ceramists, each possessing his or her own unique interpretation of the land.

"I see how beautiful Yolo County is in the morning light and again in the evening every day at my own farm,



"Farm House and Field" by Paige Decker was painted at the Clark Farm on Russell Road between Davis and Winters.

and I wanted artists to be able to capture that." says Annie Main, co-owner of Good Humus Produce in Capay and co-founder of the Art & Ag program.

"There's no greater validation of hard work than to see your land through a different pair of eyes." says Dani Thomas, Executive Director of Yolo County Arts Council.

Also part of the program are three master-artist-led mini-workshops. Artwork created from farm visits will be selected by September for exhibit in the ArtFarm event at the beginning of October. Two commissioned public art pieces will be installed in public spaces such as libraries, other public buildings or farmers' markets around the county. The need to preserve both pursuits - art and agriculture - are essential to recognizing their importance to humanity's overall wellbeing.

To learn more about the Art & Ag Program, contact Janice Purnell, Art & Ag Project Manager, YoloArts artag@yoloarts.org 530-908-4321

Yolo County farmland-inspired note cards

Are you still looking for that perfect holiday gift? How about locally inspired note cards on 100% recycled paper and a membership to YLT? Phil Gross, local artist, has generously donated his images for a series of six beautiful Yolo County ag-inspired note cards. Phil has been inspired by our local landscape for the past twenty years. You can view more of Phil's painting at www.philgross.net

You will receive six note cards on 100% recycled paper with envelopes as our appreciation to you for becoming a member of the land trust with a minimum \$50 tax deductible contribution to the YLT. You will also receive a newsletter subscription and E-news for your annual membership. Please see the enclosed envelope or go to yololandtrust.org.



"Barn, Rd 89 & 27", oil on canvas, 2007, by Phil Gross

OUR SAFE, LOCAL, HEALTHY FOOD IS AT RISK! Write to the Governor to save the Williamson Act

You wouldn't be receiving this email if you didn't feel that one of the greatest threats to California agriculture is the conversion of our food producing lands to urban development. The Williamson Act has played a critical role in keeping our food producing families on the land, growing the safe and healthy food we eat. The Governor's cancellation of the Williamson Act funding will put our valuable agriculture lands at risk. Let him know that you support the continuation of Williamson Act funding, which taxes farm land on its agriculture value as opposed to its development value. Please write Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Capitol Building, Sacramento, CA 95814, to ask him restore the Williamson Act funding in California in the January 2010 budget. For more information contact Yolo County Ag Commissioner John Young at 530-666-8148 or John.Young@yolocounty.org.

A shady Day in the Country under the walnut grove at Elkhorn Basin Ranch

Beneath a dense canopy of walnut trees at the newly-acquired Elkhorn Basin Ranch, over 500 supporters tasted local products prepared by over 50 of the region's best chefs, vintners, and olive oil makers, and one brewmaster (please see Our Supporters at yololandtrust.org for a complete list). Recently retired Yolo County Agriculture Commissioner Rick Landon was honored with the Thomson-Rominger Award for



Rick Landon, retired Ag Commissioner and 2009 Thomson-Rominger Award recipient for land preservation

Land Preservation during this year's event. Over the past 8 years, Rick has taken a leadership role in mediating discussions on issues relating to both the agricultural and environmental interests in Yolo County. He has been a strong steward for the agricultural resources of Yolo County.



Jose Garcia, Elkhorn Basin Ranch walnut grower, and family served up a delicious traditional Mexican recipe, Birria with roasted goat from their restaurant Taquesira Lupita



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Become a 4 Seasons of Local Food and Farms Sponsor

You will enjoy all of these benefits when you sponsor YLT for 4 Seasons of Food and Farms:

Sponsorship levels

Century Oak: \$5,000 - 12 tickets to events
Oak: \$2,500 - 8 tickets to events
Sapling: \$1,000 - 6 tickets to events
Seedling: \$500 - 4 tickets to events
Acorn: \$250 - 2 tickets to events

Benefits for all levels

- Listing in event programs, newsletters, and on YLT website
- Invitations to special events and field trips exclusive to 4 Season Sponsors
- Special gifts including event posters and note cards
- Newsletter subscription
- E-news subscription
- Most of all, actively preserving the land resources of Yolo County!

We would like to recognize the individuals and businesses that are currently YLT's 4 Seasons Sponsors.

Century Oak Sponsor:

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